

independent, and fiercely loyal. Max's talents could have taken him in whatever direction he desired, and he did just that by enlisting in the U.S. Navy.

After graduating from Recruit Training in Illinois, Max was assigned to the 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division out of Camp Pendleton, California.

He would go on to work in the immunization department at the Navy Hospital Guam, where he endeared himself to the locals by becoming a part of the local wrestling and martial arts community.

Max arrived in Afghanistan carrying with him his devotion to serving others, as well as extensive training in emergency medical techniques.

As a Corpsman and leader, Max was known as a "Doc," a specially trained Corpsman who provides both medical care to Marines in the unit, and is also ready and able to engage in combat right alongside them.

Dads are widely respected and possess an unbreakable bond with the Marines alongside whom they serve, owing to their responsibility of keeping the unit alive.

Max's duties extended beyond providing care and comfort to his unit. During his final days at Kabul airport, Max worked around the clock to help evacuate Americans as well as Afghan citizens, including very young children, who faced a dangerous and uncertain future if they remained.

Just before the terrorist attack on the airport, one of Max's final duties was to provide comfort to the children in need. One young boy in particular was brought through Abbey Gate and handed into the arms of Corpsman Soviak to be looked after.

This final act of Corpsman Soviak, providing aid to those going through unprecedented chaos, was a result of his extensive military training. But more than that, it came from who Max Soviak was at his core.

A strong, smart, loving, decent person who made a decision, regardless of the uncertainty or danger he faced, to join the armed forces and serve his nation in her hour of need.

The immensity of Max's loss to his family, friends, community, and our country, is as incalculable as it is heart-breaking.

That a future as bright as his would never come to pass causes a pain that will never truly fade.

But in the face of this unspeakable tragedy, where only darkness and sadness seem to reside, we hope that those who knew him and loved him most may take comfort and pride in the fact that their Max—their brother, son, and friend—did not die in vain.

Max's courage and dedication touched the lives of countless Americans and Afghans, including a young boy who had lost everything.

By standing up and answering the call to protect and defend innocent civilians, Max's actions, and his life helped to ensure that more than 120,000 people were able to reach safety after making their way through the gates where Max was stationed.

The men, women, and children whose names he will never know, but whose lives were assured by his selflessness—will serve as a symbol of his commitment until their final days.

It will never be possible to repay the debt America owes Corpsman Max Soviak or his family. He made the ultimate sacrifice, and his family and a grateful nation will forever mourn

his loss. We will honor his memory, and express our deep, unending gratitude for his willingness to serve America, and provide safety and comfort to strangers in need. Max demonstrated an uncommon heroism. For those who knew him at home in Berlin Heights, his patriotism and valor are exactly what they expected of him.

God bless and hold closely Navy Corpsman Max Soviak.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of en bloc amendments #2 and #3 which include three of my amendments that will improve transparency in our overseas contingency contracts, make our sanctions regimes more effective, and strengthen our ability to combat illicit financing networks.

My first amendment, #252, reauthorizes the Commission on Wartime Contracting which will engage in vital oversight of our contracting and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas where we conduct contingency operations.

This Commission has a proven track record of helping us reduce waste and fraud in overseas operations contracting. Indeed, in its prior iteration, from 2008 to 2011, the Commission found between \$31 billion and \$60 billion in U.S. taxpayer funds that were lost due to contract waste, fraud, and abuse in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now that the U.S. has withdrawn from Afghanistan after 20 years, and as we prepare to end our combat mission in Iraq by the end of this year—after 19 years of war—it would be irresponsible not to examine what came of the hundreds of billions in contract dollars spent during these operations.

Amendment #253 comprises the language of two vital bills. The first is the Combating Illicit Finance Through Public-Private Partnerships Act, which would expand the mandate of the interagency supervisory team convened by the Department of the Treasury to examine strategies to improve public-private partnerships to counter illicit finance by including sanctions evasion and other illicit financial activities. The amendment also contains the provisions of the Strengthening Awareness of Sanctions Act, which would establish within the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) a voluntary public-private information sharing partnership among law enforcement agencies, national security agencies, financial institutions, and OFAC, which will allow for a more effective administration and enforcement to better administer and enforce economic and trade sanctions.

This illicit finance amendment will ensure that the sanctions we impose are able to successfully cut off the funding that allow bad actors to continue to carry out terror attacks, traffic in drugs, humans, and weapons, pose threats to the U.S. and our allies, and cause instability around the world.

Finally, amendment #254 directs the President to re-establish the Afghanistan Threat Fi-

nance Cell. This interagency effort would bring together law enforcement, military, and financial intelligence resources to identify, target, disrupt, and dismantle illicit financial networks.

Like the Commission on Wartime Contracting, the Afghanistan Threat Finance Cell has also proven itself as an effective body: not long after its establishment in 2008, it was the first organization to reveal an interdependent web of links between corrupt Afghan officials, criminals, drug traffickers, and insurgents. Thanks to the efforts of the Threat Finance Cell, the Executive Branch took action to pursue broad efforts to address and combat Afghan corruption.

While the Afghanistan Threat Finance Cell ended in 2014, this effort remains just as important, especially now that the U.S. no longer has an in-country military presence. The renewed Cell will serve a critical role in tracking and disrupting the use of threat finance by insurgent groups and other illicit actors, while augmenting the oversight work of regional financial investigative units. Only by eliminating the sources of funding can we effectively take on the terrorists, drug traffickers, and other criminal elements that continue to feed into the corruption and instability in Afghanistan.

Inclusion of these amendments will strengthen congressional oversight and government transparency, as well as bolster the effectiveness of our sanctions, and provide vital tools with which to combat fraud, waste, and corruption.

I would like to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member ROGERS for including these three amendments in the two en bloc amendments. I would urge all Members to support the passage of these en blocs.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2021 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 28

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the conclusion of military operations in Afghanistan and plans for future counterterrorism operations.

SD-G50